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RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ
STATE FOR DS/IP/AF, AF/EX, DS/IP/OPO, DS/ICI/PII, DS/DSS/ITA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/20/2016

TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: TWO PHILIPPINE EXPATRIATES KIDNAPPED IN PORT
HARCOURT

Classified By: Consul General Brian L. Browne for Reason 1.4 (D and E).

¶1. (SBU) Two Philippine expatriate oil workers were kidnapped in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on June 20. Vice Consul Randy Arquiza of the Philippine Embassy confirmed the incident, identifying the hostages as Pacifico Gajo and Joseph Docdolero. Both are employees of Beaufort International, a subcontractor to Norwegian-based Petroleum Geo-Services (PGS), an oil service company. Arquiza is traveling to Port Harcourt this afternoon, June 21 to coordinate activities with PGS Port Harcourt Operations Manager Victor White. So far there has been no communication from the kidnappers.

¶2. (SBU) There are conflicting reports regarding the kidnapping. Media sources claim the two were taken by six armed men in a speed boat, but sources from other oil companies working in the Port Harcourt area say the hostages' vessel was approached by a smaller vessel complaining of engine trouble. Gajo and Docdolero offered to assist, boarding the vessel to check the engine. However, this was apparently a ruse. After the two boarded, the boat sped away with the two workers. There have been no reports of violence. These sources believe the kidnapping is possibly related to PGS Onshore's (subsidiary of PGS) recent layoff of twenty employees who are residents of nearby communities.

¶3. (C) Comment: This is the third hostage-taking in as many weeks. We expect similar attacks to continue as Niger Delta communities begin to view kidnapping as their most efficacious grievance mechanism if not a lucrative activity as well. Although these recent incidents have not been as violent or politically-motivated, they add to the uncertain operating environment in the Niger Delta. End comment.
BROWNE